



# Pondering Palm Sunday

by Emily | Mar 25, 2018 | Encouragement | 0 comments



This weekend, we celebrate Palm Sunday. I paused this morning, thinking of Jesus beginning his Passion week- the week leading up to his death on the cross. Jesus is at his peak of fame- crowds flocked to him, people adored him. Palm Sunday signals the start of a big week.

In John 12, we read that on the Eve of Palm Sunday (6 days before Passover), Jesus shared a meal with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany. As people heard Jesus was there, a large

crowd formed to see Jesus and the raised Lazarus. Can you picture it? Crowds forming outside, while Jesus and his disciples shared an intimate meal inside. What we read is that a very personal (and expensive) event occurred- Mary “took about a pint of pure nard [about 500ml], an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.” (John 12:3). Let us pause here a minute- as Jesus and his friends are eating, Mary comes and tenderly worships. She anoints him as her Lord and the whole house is touched with the lingering smell of the perfume. Martha is personally serving Jesus and his disciples instead of allowing servants to do it; showing her practical worship. Lazarus is eating with his Lord, evidence of Jesus’ power over death. In amongst all this beauty, resentment is building and spiritual sides are being drawn. At the table, Judas Iscariot condemns Mary for her wastage; outside the chief priests are plotting to kill Lazarus along with Jesus because Jews are starting to believe in Jesus. Tension is mounting: one side is worship and adoration, on the other side is condemnation and jealousy.

The next morning, we read of Jesus and his disciples entering Jerusalem. Jerusalem is busy- it is the week before Passover and many Jews had flooded into Jerusalem to celebrate this festival. Like any event, crowds bring mass emotion as well as added action. Jesus instructs his disciples to get a donkey for him to ride. As Jesus rides into Jerusalem, crowds form, waving branches, laying their cloaks on the ground and crying out “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!” (John 12:12). Here, Jesus receives adoration from the crowds and accolades. He is celebrated; all the while personally knowing that he was on the way to his death. In Matthew, we read that the whole city was stirred at this, asking who Jesus was (Matthew 21:10). The fact Jesus was in town did not

escape anyone's notice, and his notoriety was felt by the Chief Priests and Pharisees. They wanted him dead; removed from the picture.

This is where we are in the week leading up to Easter- sinful people and a holy Saviour. As Jesus entered Jerusalem and the crowd's voices swell, his eyes were not taken off his destination. In Hebrews 12:2, we read that "For the joy that was set before him [he] endured the cross, despising the shame". While the disciples' eyes were filled with the crowds, while they were elated one minute and then filled with such embarrassment that they fled Jesus' side in the days to follow, Jesus looked to the joy of conquering death and his exaltation to be with the Father.

While the crowds praised and then cursed; Jesus was steadfast.

As I consider this, I question whether my eyes are looking firmly to my future hope, or if they are distracted by things around me. When Jesus' was at the pinnacle of earthly fame, it was worthless in his eyes. Instead, he humbly submitted to the will of God, saving you and me. How grateful we are that now we have a certain hope, that we can steadfastly fix our eyes on him, and he can help us to not be distracted by the things of this earth that one day will be forgotten. May you be reminded afresh of Jesus' perspective so that we can grow a little more like this humble King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes!

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